

In the Claims:

Kindly amend the claims as indicated.

1. (Currently Amended) A method for creating a message on a client node operatively coupled to a host node over a network, said method comprising:

choosing, by said client node, a soundscape provided by said host node to said client node, said soundscape comprising a plurality of distinct audio files including at least a front punctuating sound, a background, and a back punctuating sound;

recording, by said client node, a message; and

mixing, by said client node, said soundscape and said message in a predetermined manner, wherein:

 during a first time period, the sound level of said front punctuating sound is raised to a level higher than the sound level of said message and said back punctuating sound,

 during a second time period occurring after said first time period, the sound level of said front punctuating sound and said background is lowered to a level lower than the sound level of said message and the sound level of said message is raised to a level higher than the sound level of said front punctuating sound, said background, and said back punctuating sound, and

 during a third time period occurring after said second time period, the sound level of said message is lowered to a level lower than the sound level of said back punctuating sound and the sound level of said back punctuating sound is raised to a level higher than the sound level of said front punctuating sound and said message.

2. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein said network comprises the Internet.
3. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein said act of mixing said soundscape further includes the act of trimming silence from said recorded message.
4. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein said act of mixing said soundscape further includes the act of normalizing said recorded message.
5. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein said act of mixing said soundscape further includes the act of interleaving said recorded message with said chosen soundscape.
6. (Cancelled).
7. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 5, wherein said act of interleaving further includes the acts of:
 - determining, by said client node, the length of said recorded message;
 - mixing, by said client node into a separate file, said front punctuating sound at a predetermined level;
 - mixing by said client node into said separate file, said background at a predetermined level;
 - mixing, by said client node into said separate file, said recorded message at a predetermined level; and
 - mixing, by said client node into said separate file, said background punctuating sound after said length of said recorded message at a predetermined level.

8. (Original) The method of claim 7, wherein said act of mixing said background is characterized by said background being mixed down to a bed volume during said length of said recorded message.

9. (Currently Amended) An apparatus for creating a message, said apparatus being operatively configured as a client node operatively coupled to a host node over a network, said apparatus comprising:

means for a choosing soundscape provided by said host node to said client node, said soundscape comprising a plurality of distinct audio files including at least a front punctuating sound, a background, and a back punctuating sound;

means for recording a message; and

means for mixing said soundscape and said message in a predetermined manner,

wherein:

during a first time period, the sound level of said front punctuating sound is raised to a level higher than the sound level of said message and said back punctuating sound,

during a second time period occurring after said first time period, the sound level of said front punctuating sound and said background is lowered to a level lower than the sound level of said message and the sound level of said message is raised to a level higher than the sound level of said front punctuating sound, said background, and said back punctuating sound, and

during a third time period occurring after said second time period, the sound level of said message is lowered to a level lower than the sound level of said back punctuating sound and the sound level of said back punctuating sound is raised to a level higher than the sound level of said front punctuating sound and said message.

10. (Original) The apparatus of claim 9, wherein said network comprises the Internet.
11. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 9 wherein said means for mixing said soundscape further includes means for trimming silence from said recorded message.
12. (Original) The apparatus of claim 9 wherein means for mixing said soundscape further includes means for normalizing said recorded message.
13. (Original) The apparatus of claim 9 wherein said means for mixing said soundscape further includes means for interleaving said recorded message with said chosen soundscape.
14. (Cancelled).
15. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 13, wherein said means for interleaving further includes the acts of:
 - means for determining the length of said recorded message;
 - means for mixing said front punctuating sound at a predetermined level;
 - means for mixing said background at a predetermined level;
 - means for mixing said recorded message at a predetermined level; and
 - means for mixing said background punctuating sound after said length of said recorded message at a predetermined level.

16. (Original) The method of claim 15, wherein said means for mixing said background is characterized by said background being mixed down to a bed volume during said length of said recorded message.

17. (Currently Amended) An apparatus for creating a message, said apparatus being operatively configured as a host node capable of being operatively coupled to a client node over a network, said apparatus comprising:

means for providing a soundscape to said client node, said soundscape comprising a plurality of distinct audio files including at least a front punctuating sound, a background, and a back punctuating sound;

means for providing said client node with means for recording a message; and

means for providing said client node with means for means for mixing said soundscape and said message in a predetermined manner, wherein:

during a first time period, the sound level of said front punctuating sound is raised to a level higher than the sound level of said message and said back punctuating sound,

during a second time period occurring after said first time period, the sound level of said front punctuating sound and said background is lowered to a level lower than the sound level of said message and the sound level of said message is raised to a level higher than the sound level of said front punctuating sound, said background, and said back punctuating sound, and

during a third time period occurring after said second time period, the sound level of said message is lowered to a level lower than the sound level of said back punctuating sound and the sound level of said back punctuating sound is raised to a level higher than the sound level of said front punctuating sound and said message.

18. (Original) The apparatus of claim 17, wherein said network comprises the Internet.
19. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 17 wherein said means for providing said client node with means for mixing said soundscape further includes means for trimming silence from said recorded message.
20. (Original) The apparatus of claim 17 wherein means for providing said client node with means for mixing said soundscape further includes means for normalizing said recorded message.
21. (Original) The apparatus of claim 17 wherein said means for providing said client node with means for mixing said soundscape further includes means for interleaving said recorded message with said chosen soundscape.
22. (Cancelled).
23. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 21, wherein said means for providing said client node with means for interleaving further includes the acts of:
 - providing said client node with means for means for determining the length of said recorded message;
 - providing said client node with means for mixing said front punctuating sound at a predetermined level;
 - providing said client node with means for mixing said background at a predetermined level;

providing said client node with means for mixing said recorded message at a predetermined level; and

providing said client node with means for mixing said background punctuating sound after said length of said recorded message at a predetermined level.

24. (Original) The method of claim 23, wherein said means for mixing said background is characterized by said background being mixed down to a bed volume during said length of said recorded message.

25. (Currently Amended) A method for creating a message on a host node operatively coupled to a client node over a network, said method comprising:

providing, by a host node, a choice of soundscapes to a client node, said soundscapes comprising a plurality of distinct audio files including at least a front punctuating sound, a background, and a back punctuating sound;

receiving, by said host node, instructions from said client node regarding the content of a soundscape as chosen by said client node; and

mixing, by said host node, a recorded message with a chosen soundscape according to said instructions, wherein:

during a first time period, the sound level of said front punctuating sound is raised to a level higher than the sound level of said message and said back punctuating sound,

during a second time period occurring after said first time period, the sound level of said front punctuating sound and said background is lowered to a level lower than the sound level of said message and the sound level of said message is raised to a

level higher than the sound level of said front punctuating sound, said background, and said back punctuating sound, and

during a third time period occurring after said second time period, the sound level of said message is lowered to a level lower than the sound level of said back punctuating sound and the sound level of said back punctuating sound is raised to a level higher than the sound level of said front punctuating sound and said message.

26. (Original) The method of claim 25, wherein said network comprises the Internet.

27. (Original) The method of claim 25 wherein said act of mixing further includes the act of interleaving said recorded message with said chosen soundscape.

28. (Cancelled).